

THE BRITISH ESPERANTIST

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE BRITISH ESPERANTO ASSOCIATION (Inc.)

ISSUED ON THE 15TH OF EACH MONTH.

Vol. XX.—No. 247.

OCTOBER, 1925.

THE BRITISH ESPERANTO ASSOCIATION (INCORPORATED).

17 HART STREET, LONDON, W.C.1.

Telephone: Museum 617.

Telegrams: "Esperanto", Westcent, London.

Late Hon. President: DR. L. L. ZAMENHOF.

Hon. President: J. M. WARDEN.

President: JOHN MERCHANT.

Vice-Presidents: J. J. BOUTWOOD, J.P.

PROF. W. E. COLLINSON, M.A., Ph.D.
W. HARVEY, I.S.O.

Hon. Secretary: CHARLES H. EDMONDS.

Hon. Treasurer: CHARLES A. FAIRMAN.

Secretary: MONTAGU C. BUTLER, L.R.A.M.

Business Manager: HARRY A. EPTON.

The Association consists of Fellows, Members, Associates, Affiliated Groups and Federations. The Annual Subscriptions are:—Fellows, 21s.; Members, 10s.; Associates, 2s. 6d.; Life Fellowship, £12:12:0. Life Membership, £7:10:0.

A Fellow or Member may join the U.E.A. as *Membro-Abonanto* at a reduced additional fee of 10/- (instead of 12/6). i.e., F.B.E.A.-U.E.A. 31/-, M.B.E.A.-U.E.A. £1.

This Official Organ is sent each month to Fellows and Members.

LITERATURO—A quarterly literary magazine in Esperanto. Fellows and Members receive this magazine free. Subscription: 2/- per annum, post free.

INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE—A monthly magazine in English devoted to the study of the International Language problem. Includes instructional articles on Esperanto and *La Juna Lernanto*, a supplement for beginners. Subscription, 2/6 per annum, post free.

REPORT OF COUNCIL MEETING.

A meeting of the Council of the Association was held at the Offices on Monday, 28th September, 1925.

PRESENT:—J. Merchant (in the Chair), P. Blaise, Miss M. L. Blake, J. J. Boutwood, H. Boll, Mrs. W. E. Clayton, C. H. Edmonds, C. A. Fairman, B. E. Long, Miss O'Brien, R. Robertson, F. R. Shelton, Miss C. O. Taylor, F. O. Lechmere-Oertel.

IN ATTENDANCE:—G. T. Smith (by invitation), The Secretary, The Business Manager.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were read from Prof. Collinson, Rev. Downes, W. Harvey, W. R. Wood, Miss A. L. Borel.

New Councillor. It was reported that Mr. W. Harvey, who was elected both a Vice-President and a Councillor, had resigned the latter office in order not to occupy a dual office on the Council. Mr. G. T. Smith was appointed a Councillor in his place.

Celebration of Association's 21st Birthday. It was decided that a Birthday Celebration Dinner be held on Saturday, 5th December, in London, the arrangements to be similar to those for the Dinner on 28th February last.

Reports. Reports were presented by the Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Secretary. Mr. Ce's Tour, Edinburgh Congress, Gramophone Records, K.R. and Proposed Radio Campaign, were also reported upon.

"International Language." On the motion of Mr. Edmonds, Honorary Editor of *International Language*, Mr. Wadham was appointed Hon. Assistant Editor.

Committee on the Future of the Association. A Second Report by this Committee, signed by all its members, was presented, copies having previously been circulated to all Councillors. Mr. Edmonds, as Chairman of the Committee, dealt with questions and remarks on the Report. Some discussion took place on a proposal by the Midland Federation that the subscription for Members be reduced to 5/- and that for Fellows to 10/6, but it was felt undesirable to make so drastic a change at the moment.

The Council unanimously adopted the Report and passed the necessary resolutions to give effect to all its

recommendations, with the exception of that relating to the reduction of the subscription to 7/6, for which the vote of a General Meeting is necessary. It was decided to call a General Meeting of Members for consideration and decision under this head for 6.30 p.m., on Friday, 6th November, 1925, at the Offices. The Report is printed *in extenso* below for information of Members.

Officers. The President, Mr. Merchant, pointed out that the recent growth of the Association's activities had thrust considerable additional work and responsibility on the Officers and the present system was hardly adequate to present needs.

It so happened that the President and Vice-Presidents elected this year all resided at considerable distance from the Offices. In these circumstances it was felt to be essential that the Association should have additional Officers in London to carry out detail work, and that at the same time there should be someone in London to turn to for quick decisions, and who would keep an eye on affairs generally. The President therefore proposed, and it was unanimously agreed, that the necessary steps be taken to set up the office of Chairman of the Association, with a view to appointing Mr. Edmonds to that office and Messrs Boll and Wadham, joint Honorary Secretaries.

REPORT BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE FUTURE OF THE ASSOCIATION.

GENERAL BASIS.

The General Basis on which the Association is at present run has been further considered by the Committee, together with the objections raised to its interim report. The Committee is still strongly of the opinion that this basis will best serve the Association for some years to come, but that it is imperative to obviate the

necessity for a Guarantee Supplementary Fund each year by increasing the income from other sources.

PREMISES.

In continuation of the report with regard to premises, the general conclusion arrived at is that the most economical procedure would be to lease a building for a term of years, rather larger than would be required at the moment, and to let off the spare accommodation on short lease or leases. This would probably involve the payment of a premium in addition to subsequent annual rent. A typical example that has come before the Committee is as follows:—

Gower Street, W.C. 1. (Nearly opposite University College). Entire Premises, comprising: Third floor, 3 rooms; Second floor, 2 large rooms: Half landing; Bathroom; Ground floor, 3 rooms; Tiled hall; Basement, 2 rooms and scullery. Possession of Ground, Basement, 1st floor and one small room on third floor; remainder (2nd floor and 2 rooms on 3rd floor) are let at £150 p.a. Rent £120 p.a. exclusive. Lease about 6½ years. Rates about £80 p.a. Premium £1250. Further 21 years' lease would probably be granted at about £200 p.a.

Such a scheme would necessitate the raising of some capital, which could be done by Debentures repayable by annual drawings over the period of the lease; the funds required for this being charged to Revenue Account as part of the rent. This scheme might have to be modified, of course, by any unforeseen circumstances arising up to the time of actually taking premises, but it must be considered almost imperative that capital of about £1000 be raised at an early date.

In the meantime it was ascertained that the building containing the present offices had been sold subject to a tenancy lease to the late owner to the end of 1926, and the Committee has since made an arrangement with the late owner, subject to ratification by the Council, on the following terms: "We should be willing to stay on as at present after the end of 1925 at the rate of £275 per annum inclusive of everything that is included in our present rent. The landlord to agree to release us from all liabilities to repaint and redecorate the offices under our present lease, and to allow us to remove our furniture and fixtures at the end of our tenancy, leaving him to do any cleaning, touching up, or decorating that may be required. The tenancy to be at three month's notice on either side as from Lady Day."

The present lease provides that the Association shall redecorate the premises on leaving. The cost of this was estimated at £45, and to meet this expenditure £15 has been set aside in each of the years 1923, 1924 and 1925. As the proposed arrangement with the Landlord releases the Association from the obligation to redecorate the offices, this sum of £45 is available towards the increased rent for 1926.

It will be seen that under this arrangement the Association can give notice on Lady day to leave at Midsummer, but cannot be asked to leave before the latter date, so that the tenancy is secure until Midsummer, 1926. In the opinion of the Committee this gives a sufficient period for capital to be raised and suitable premises secured on the lines indicated in the recent Report.

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

The backbone of the Association's finances should be the income from Membership Subscriptions, and it is felt that what is required is to find some means of effecting a substantial increase in the number of Members.

Figures have been examined, and it is found that at the end of 1924 there were approximately 25 Life Fellows and Members, in addition to about 130 Fellows, and 870

Members. The total income from Fellows' and Members' subscriptions for 1924 was £570, of which about £135 was from Fellows and £435 from Members.

The net cost of producing and distributing *Literaturo* was £50, which is equivalent to about 1/- per head.

The Committee feels strongly that the present subscription for Members of 10/-, though justified at the time of its introduction, by materially increasing the income over that obtainable on a 5/- subscription, now militates against a larger membership, and that a reduction in some form is necessary if income under this head is to be increased and lapsed Members are to be induced to rejoin the Association.

The present system of two magazines given to Fellows and Members, and another magazine at an extra subscription, to which, however, the bulk of the Fellows and Members subscribe, was agreed to be to some extent uneconomical, and to involve some complications in the system of records and dispatch.

A proposal was brought forward that *Literaturo* be no longer given to Fellows and Members, but that the subscriptions of 10/- and £1 1 0 be retained, and *International Language* be supplied to Members in place of *Literaturo*.

If this were done, *International Language* should of course be credited with a proportion of the subscriptions of Fellows and Members: say 2/6 per head, which is the amount at present paid by the Members and Fellows who subscribe to the magazine. Under this arrangement the total income would remain at £570, of which £125 would have to be credited to *International Language*, leaving the net income from Fellows' and Members' subscriptions at £445.

An alternative proposal is that *Literaturo* be no longer given to Fellows and Members, but that *International Language* remain as at present, and the Membership subscription be reduced to 7/6. On this basis the total income from Membership and Fellowship subscriptions based on the present register would be £445, and the income of *International Language* would be unaltered.

There would be a saving of £50 on *Literaturo*, so that the maximum loss of income under either proposal on Membership and Fellowship Subscriptions, assuming no increase in Membership, would be £75.

The various advantages and disadvantages of the two proposals have been carefully considered, and the conclusion arrived at is that in spite of the complications already mentioned, it is of the utmost importance that *International Language* should be retained as an independent propaganda magazine, conducted on a more or less commercial basis, and that its freedom of opinion and development should in no way be curtailed by any possible risk of the magazine becoming an official organ of the Association.

In these circumstances the Committee recommends:

- (a) That the Fellowship subscription be retained at £1 1 0.
- (b) That the Membership subscription be reduced to 7/6 as from Jan. 1st, 1926.
- (c) That *Literaturo* be no longer published as a quarterly magazine.
- (d) That *International Language* be retained as at present.

The Committee is of opinion that if these recommendations are adopted, and a special vigorous campaign is conducted, commencing forthwith, the Association should gain so much in numerical strength, that the income is much more likely to be increased than to suffer any abatement: the more so in view of the coming tour of Mr. Ceh, and the interest that will be aroused in the early part of next year by the forthcoming Edinburgh Congress.

INDUCEMENTS TO MEMBERSHIP.

With a view to encouraging the adhesion of new Members and retaining old ones, the Committee further recommends that each Member, on paying his subscription for the year, be given a sheet of 20 coupons, each entitling him to free postage on 5/- worth of books; and that each Fellow be given three such sheets. When a Member or Fellow ordered books, he would under this scheme attach one coupon to his order for each 5/- (or part of 5/-) worth of books ordered. If, for example, a Member ordered 7/6 worth of books, he would have to send two coupons. The coupons would be non-transferable, and each year would be of a different colour; only current coupons being usable.

In addition to providing an inducement to join the Association, this scheme would stimulate book sales if Members took advantage of it and ordered books to multiples of 5/-.

The gross receipts in 1924 from book purchases by individuals at full published prices was £500, and it is assumed that of this sum sales to Members represented about £300: an average of 6/- per Member per annum.

If coupons had been used last year in all cases, the cost to the Association would have been about £21. It should be easy to stimulate sales by this scheme sufficiently to recoup the Association for this expense, whilst if only one half of the present members were to use all their coupons during the year, the Book Sales from this source alone would amount to £2500, i.e., nearly double last year's total Book Sales from all sources.

This scheme could of course apply to Esperanto books only.

As a still further inducement to new Members it is recommended that each new Member, on joining, be presented with a badge (pin or brooch), of latest type, the neatest the Association sells, put up on a card in a box. This would cost the Association 3d. each.

ESPERANTO BOOKSELLING DEPARTMENT.

The possibility of handing over the book business to an outside bookseller was further considered. In this connection the figure of £1290 was given as the total of Book Sales for 1924, and the gross profit (less advertising expenses) as £202. Against the gross profit must be set the cost of running the book business, which is roughly estimated at £400 per annum.

It was felt that no bookseller would take on the proposition on seeing the figure of £202 gross profit, especially when it would be fair to assume that an outsider with less specialised means of advertising would have a smaller turnover. The business involved entails considerable dealings with foreign publishers and foreign buyers, and is not of a nature which would appeal to outside booksellers, who would of necessity have to employ someone conversant with the book business, and with a thorough knowledge of Esperanto and the Movement. This would certainly involve a figure very nearly approximating the present one of £400 for salaries, rent, and expenses.

An alternative suggestion, that the bookselling business be handed over to some private Esperantist as a part time occupation on his own responsibility, did not commend itself to the Committee, as such a proposition does not contain in itself the guarantees as to continuity and stability that are essential.

At the same time it was considered that under either of these proposals the Movement would suffer to a great extent, as no bookseller or private Esperantist would devote the same continuous attention to the pushing and advertising of Esperanto books as the Association now does.

It is, moreover, obvious that it would be impossible to run *International Language* on its present lines without a properly organised business side to the Association.

Under these circumstances the Committee is of the opinion that the Book Sales Department should be continued.

The B.E.A. book-list, containing titles as published at present, should appear only once each year, and there should be issued supplementary book-lists containing matter descriptive of a continually changing list of selected books. The Committee further recommends that the Executive Committee be requested to keep a continuous watch on book sales, and to initiate and develop schemes for increasing income under this head. Such supervision, in addition to the coupon scheme outlined above, should bring about a substantial improvement in the profits arising from the sales of Esperanto books.

NON-ESPERANTO BOOKSELLING DEPARTMENT.

The Committee views with satisfaction the amount of business already done in non-Esperanto books, and recommends that this department be more fully developed and advertised; the attention of Members being drawn to the advantage the Association derives from these orders. This department is capable of considerable development before it involves any additional overhead charges.

ASSOCIATES.

When it was decided to change the subscription for Associates from One Guinea to 2/6 per annum, it was hoped that Members throughout the country would use their best endeavours to get a large number of Associates. There are in fact at the present time only 24 Associates. This is partly due to the lack of some special literature containing a subscription form, but is probably more accounted for by the appearance of *International Language*, as many who are merely interested in the Esperanto Movement have been secured as subscribers to *International Language* rather than as Associates.

The income from those who are merely interested has thus not been lost to the Association, and the Committee feels that it is better that supporters should receive a monthly magazine to keep and increase their interest, than that they should pay the same amount and receive merely a receipt and the Annual Report of the Association. On the other hand, Associateship should not be neglected, since there is no doubt that if Members were provided with suitable literature, they could induce a limited number of people to support the Association in this way in addition to subscribing to *International Language*; and the Committee recommends that an attractive folder be published inviting sympathisers with the Movement to join the Association as Associates, and at the same time setting forth the advantages of subscribing to *International Language* and thus keeping in touch.

NEW SOURCES OF INCOME. GRAMOPHONE RECORDS.

The Committee looks for a substantial revenue from the sale of Esperanto Gramophone Records, and suggests that other schemes for subsidiary revenue be devised and exploited to the utmost.

In this connection it must be remembered that the Memorandum of Association limits the possible activities of the Association as a trading concern to some extent.

U.E.A. SUBSCRIPTION SCHEME.

With regard to the combined subscription scheme, by which the B.E.A. collects subscriptions for the U.E.A., the Committee considers that at least another year's working is required before the effect can be properly estimated, and recommends that the Council consider the matter at a later date with a view to determining its effect on the finances of the Association and the welfare of the Movement. The rates under this scheme would have to be modified on the adoption of the reduced B.E.A. subscription recommended above.

ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE.

The Committee has gone closely into the items of expenditure of the Association. A glance at the Balance Sheet shows that the largest item is that of salaries, and for this reason the Committee has carefully investigated the working of the office with a view to suggesting any alterations in the staff or in the method of working which might result in economies. It feels, however, that since it is desirable to continue and extend the present departments of the Association, a smaller staff, or a re-arranged staff, at a lower aggregate cost, could not efficiently conduct the work. It must be remembered that the Association is first and foremost a propaganda Association, and that propaganda consists largely of personal work. For this reason Members must expect a substantial expenditure on salaries, and the present expenditure of from £800 to £850 per annum, while at first sight high, is by no means excessive when considered in conjunction with the immense amount of propaganda work carried on in all directions and with the annual turnover of the Association, which for the current year will amount to approximately £4000.

With regard to other items of expenditure, the Committee recommends that the Council and the Executive Committee keep a close watch on each suggested expense with a view to eliminating any items not sufficiently remunerative or that could be dispensed with.

GUARANTEE FUND.

The Committee does not propose to make any recommendation with regard to the Guarantee Fund, but thinks that if it is generally felt that some change in the basis of the Fund or the system of working is desirable, the question should be discussed by the meeting of Guarantors prior to the Annual General Meeting at Huddersfield.

GROUP SYSTEM.

The above recommendations complete the work of the Committee, with the exception of that under one important head. In the course of its investigations the Committee has surveyed the system of Groups, Federations, and National Association, in this country, and is of the firm opinion that the Groups as at present constituted do not—as groups—sufficiently represent the Association, or co-operate in its activities. Moreover, there should be some representation of the Association in places where no groups exist.

The Committee proposes to secure and tabulate information with regard to the present status and activities of the Groups, and to invite suggestions for making some change in or addition to the present system, in order not only to provide a closer link between individual Esperantists and Headquarters, but also to furnish efficient local representatives, to whom Headquarters can turn with the certainty of active co-operation, or at least some response.

On receipt of the information and suggestions referred to, the Committee will prepare a scheme for the consideration of the Annual Meeting of 1926, after due circulation beforehand.

It is particularly important that the whole matter be considered at an early date, as the number of affiliated groups and the membership thereof tends to decrease.

In considering the matter, it must be borne in mind that the government of the Association at the present time is largely vested in Delegate Councillors elected by these groups. Any change in the group system may thus involve some alteration in the system of government of the Association.

In making the above remarks with regard to Groups, the Committee does not in any way wish to depreciate the splendid service rendered to the Association by local groups in many districts. There are groups, and more

especially group officials, standing out as shining examples of what might be in each district. But these are unfortunately rather the exception than the rule.

(Signed) J. D. APPLEBAUM
H. BOLL
C. H. EDMONDS (Chairman)
C. A. FAIRMAN
J. T. HOLMES
B. E. LONG
J. MERCHANT
W. M. PAGE
R. ROBERTSON
W. H. STURGE.

Owing to pressure on our space, Group Reports, etc., are unavoidably held over till next month.

The British Esperanto Association (Inc.),
17 HART STREET, LONDON, W.C. 1.

Official Notices.

CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERSHIP.

W. H. ANDREW, 16 Victoria St., Alloa, Scotland;
ROBERT A. E. ARMSTRONG, Thronemount, Whirewell, Belfast;
MISS ELSIE BURKETT, Merriville, Victoria Rd., Mablethorpe;
THOMAS CAWLEY, 36 Bewsey Rd., Warrington;
REGINALD G. JEFFREYS, 74 Doyle Gardens, Harlesden, N.W. 10;
MISS CATHERINE E. MARSHALL, 2 Linnell Drive, Hampstead Way, N.W. 11;
BRIAN O. PRICE-HEYWOOD, 1 Lathom Road, Southport, Lancs;
EDWARD W. WOODRUFF, 5 High St., Margate;
THOMAS W. HOLMES, Ellerslie, Laleham Rd., Shepperton.

NEW COUNCILLOR.

George T. Smith, London.

B.E.A. GUARANTEE FUND, 1925.

	£	s.	d.
Previous total (corrected)	509	1	0
Barlow, C. H., London	1	10	0
Blond, J. Le, Bedhampton	1	0	0
Collinson, W. E., Liverpool	3	0	0
Dunbar, R., Athens (Total 10/-)	5	0	
Home, Mrs. M. J., Swansea	10	0	
Le Brun, P., London	1	0	0
Gregsten, B., London	1	0	0
Course, J., Royston	1	10	0
Mitchell, H. B., London	2	2	0
Adams, A. J., Hastings (Total £10)	5	0	0
Hesketh, J., Selby (Total £1)	10	0	
Blaikie, J., London	3	0	0
Welch, Miss E. M., Southport	10	0	
Gilmour, R., Glasgow	15	0	
Geldert, J. M., Halifax	1	0	0
	£531	13	0

DONATIONS TO B.E.A. (Sept., 1925).

Mrs. Hathway, 7/6, "Esperanto" Sapo, £2, Miss P. Aston, 3/6,
P. Robinson, 2/6, Dr. Ratten, 7/6.

MONTAGU C. BUTLER, Secretary.

PASSED PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION.

George C. L. Smith, London.

PASSED ADVANCED EXAMINATION.

Isaac Flower, London; Reginald G. Marsh, Woodford Green, Essex.

WM. HARVEY, Hon. Sec.

1st October, 1925.

Examination Committee.

Sewell, Presisto Deal.